

# 1936 Graf Zeppelin Mail Service

In 1936 the Hindenburg began commercial airmail service, a new airship terminal opened at Frankfurt am Main, and zeppelin mail deliveries were even more closely integrated into those of the Deutsche Lufthansa South Atlantic service.

**1936 Graf Zeppelin Schedule** - Thirteen flights every two weeks from April to November.

**The Hindenburg** - New zeppelin began regular transatlantic service in late March - Schedules of the two airships were coordinated on the South American service.

**New Airship Terminal at Frankfurt am Main** - Opened in May - South America mail was processed there, even though the Graf Zeppelin flew from either Friedrichshafen or Frankfurt.

**Closer Integration with DLH** - The portion of the route on which the Graf Zeppelin carried the mail decreased through out the year - When the Spanish Civil War prevented exchanges at Seville in July, exchange points were moved progressively closer to South America.

Montélimar - Lisbon - Las Palmas - Bathurst.

**New Cachet Code Letters** - Cachet code letter locations were reassigned when the new terminal opened at Frankfurt am Main in May.

☆ Frankfurt am Main	b Frankfurt am Main	d Frankfurt am Main (October)
a Berlin	c Frankfurt am Main	e Frankfurt am Main

**Quantities of Mail** - Increased to about 50,000 letters per crossing.



## FIRST TO FOURTH 1936 FLIGHTS

**Temporary Loss of Letter Mail Franchise** - From April to June all letter mail was again flown by DLH.



No cachet used on board after the first flight

**Passenger Card from a "Non-Postal" Flight** - Posted on third return flight - Postage RM 1.25 airmail, .15 surface card.



South America  
Flight postmarkUsed one day  
before the flight

Transfer Flight from Friedrichshafen to Frankfurt am Main - Flight to Brazil next day - Postage RM .50 zeppelin postcard in Europe.

## FIFTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

	Frankfurt	Seville	Recife
DLH	25 Jun	25 Jun	
Zeppelin		26 Jun	28 Jun



Mail Exchange at Seville - late posting flown by DLH to Seville, where mail was transferred to the Graf Zeppelin for the flight to Brazil - Postage RM 1.25 airmail, .25 surface.

Seville was the normal exchange point until the Spanish Civil War began in July.



Recife	Seville	Frankfurt
3 July	6 July	
	6 July	6 July



**Bolivia** - Zeppelin airmail dispatches from Bolivia resumed after the Gran Chaco war with Paraguay ended in early 1936.

Date in the Prague postmark confirms carriage by zeppelin.

Postage 1.70 = 1.50 boliviano airmail, .25 surface.

## SIXTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

	Berlin	Frankfurt	Seville	Recife
DLH	9 Jul	9 Jul	9 Jul	
Zeppelin			9 Jul	12 Jul



**Jugoslavia** - Cachet letter "a" for Berlin - Mail Exchange at Seville - Sent by an export firm in Belgrade - Flown from Berlin to Frankfurt for the connecting flight to Seville - Postage 50.00 airmail (2x 25.00 per five grams), 3.50 surface.



Friedr	Reich	Nio
9 Jul	12 Jul	
	12 Jul	12 Jul

Muster ohne Wert

Sample without Value



**Reduced Rates for Sample Merchandise** - Weight 100 grams - Postage RM 6.40 = 6.00 airmail (4 x 1.50 per 25 grams beyond Brazil), .10 surface, .30 registration - Letter rate postage would have been RM 31.15.





Hungary - From a smelting and metalwork company near Budapest -  
Stamps on back for 3.50 pengő airmail beyond Brazil, .40 surface.

SEVENTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

Pneumatic marking on back

1A 26 JUL 25 N 2 55



Sent by Pneumatic Mail within Munich - Time clock marking 1A 26 JUL 25 N2 55 on back shows the letter arrived by pneumatic tube at central post office 1A at 2:55 p.m. - No extra charge for this internal service - Postage RM 1.50 airmail beyond Brazil, .25 surface.



	Frankfurt	Montelimar	Recife
DLH	30 Jul	30 Jul	
Zeppelin		30 Jul	2 Aug



 **Great Britain - Mail Exchange at Montélimar in France** - Late posting flown by DLH from Frankfurt am Main to meet the airship at Montélimar - Postage 4s airmail beyond Brazil.

SEVENTH 1936 RETURN FLIGHT

	Recife	Montélimar	Marseille
Zeppelin	7 Aug	10 Aug	
DLH		10 Aug	10 Aug




**ZEPPELIN ROUTES DISRUPTED BY SPANISH CIVIL WAR**

The zeppelin routes to South America were changed to avoid passing over Spain when the Civil War began in July 1936.

**A French airfield at Montélimar was used as an exchange point on an emergency basis.**



 **Mail Exchange at Montélimar - Only Mail for France and Italy was Exchanged** - After the exchange DLH flew the mail to Marseille for delivery by the French and Italians - Mail for other countries was flown by the zeppelin to Frankfurt am Main.



	Friedr.	Recife	Rio
Zeppelin	13 Aug	16 Aug	
Condor		16 Aug	16 Aug



**British India to Brazil** - Flown from Calcutta to Europe by British Imperial Airways - Reached Europe at a date and time when the Graf Zeppelin provided the next airmail service to Brazil - Postage 46 annas airmail rate from India to Brazil, 3½ annas surface.

Rio arrival marking 16 August confirms zeppelin delivery.

## EIGHTH 1936 RETURN FLIGHT

	Recife	Lisbon	Frankfurt
Zeppelin	21 Aug	24 Aug	
DLH		24 Aug	24 Aug



**Paraguay** - Dropped at New Exchange Point at Lisbon - Postage 57.50 pesos airmail, 3.50 surface on back.

Lisbon was the exchange point during August and September.



	Recife	Lisbon	Marseille
Zeppelin	21 Aug	24 Aug	
DLH		24 Aug	24 Aug



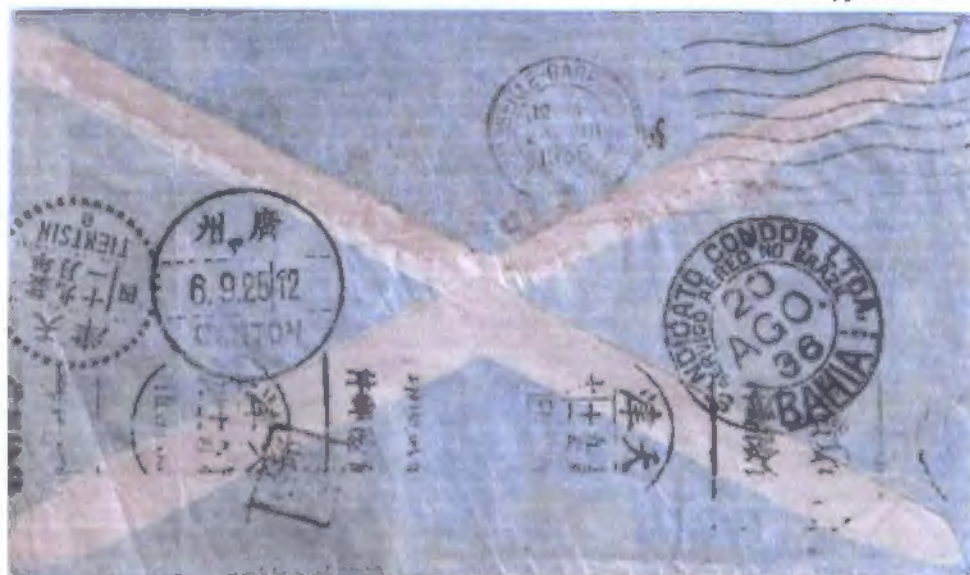
"Surcharge paid  
for Air Route  
outside of France"

Applied at Marseille



**Brazil to China - By zeppelin to Europe, by Air France to the Far East - Extra postage paid for air delivery to Asia - Postage 4\$200 airmail to Europe, 2\$000 airmail to China.**

Photocopy of reverse



Marseille  
24 Aug 1936

Canton  
6 Sept 1936

Tientsin  
11 Sept 1936



Flown by Air France weekly service  
Marseille to Hanoi.

Then by Chinese National Air Corps  
from Hanoi to Canton.

Missed the air connection at Canton  
(red "flight delayed" marking on  
front), and sent by railway to Tientsin.



	Frankfurt	Recife	B. Aires
Zeppelin	9 Sep	12 Sep	
Condor		12 Sep	13 Sep



**Reduced Rate for Commercial Papers** - "Geschäftspapiere" identifies this class of mail - Weight 41 grams - Postage RM 3.00 airmail (2 x 1.50 per 25 grams beyond Brazil), .25 surface, .30 registration.



	Frankfurt	Lisbon	Recife
DLH	10 Sep	10 Sep	
Zeppelin		10 Sep	12 Sep



Deutsche Lufthansa Flight to Exchange Point at Lisbon - Late posting put on the connecting flight at Frankfurt am Main, which flew to meet the airship at Lisbon - Postage 3s 6d airmail.

## TENTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

	Frankfurt	Recife	Santiago
Zeppelin	23 Sep	27 Sep	
Condor		27 Sep	28 Sep



Meter Franking - Postage RM 1.50 airmail beyond Brazil, .25 surface.



	Frankfurt	Recife	Rio
Zeppelin	23 Sep	27 Sep	
Condor		27 Sep	27 Sep



Postage Added Later - RM .25 added by post office which sent a bill to the sender - Purple postmarks inscribed "Nachträglich entwertet" (cancelled later) - Postage RM1.50 airmail beyond Brazil, .25 surface.

## ELEVENTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

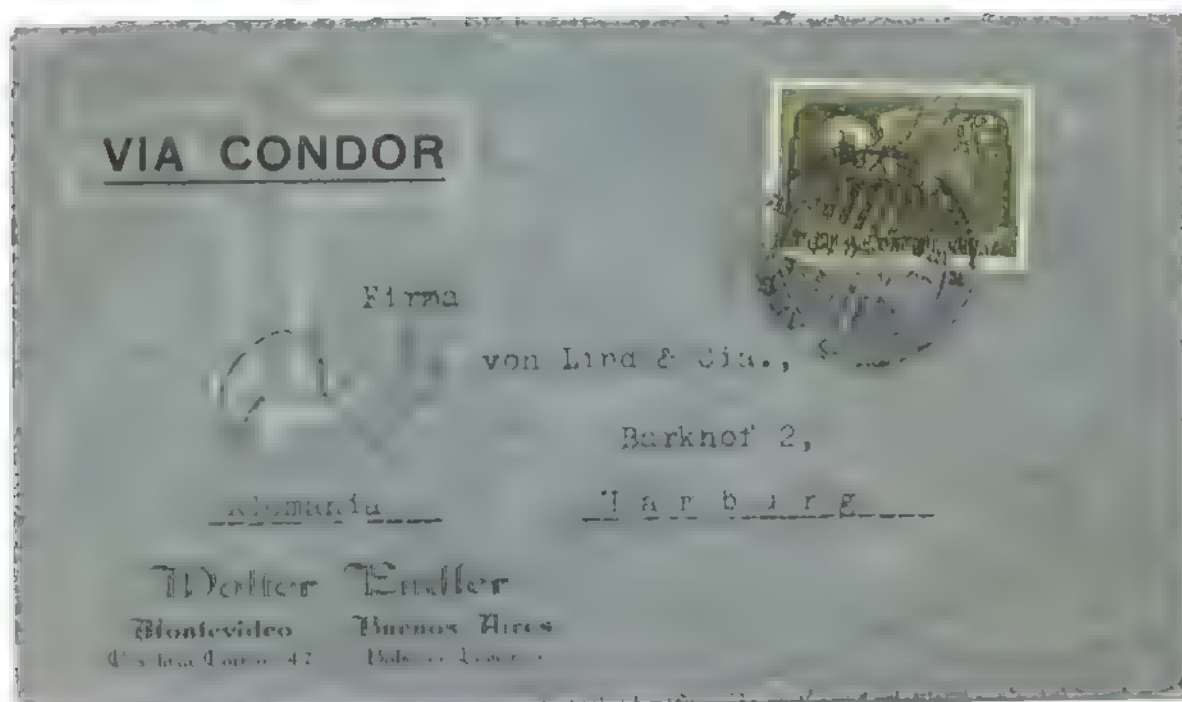
	Friedr	Recife	Santiago
Zeppelin	8 Oct	11 Oct	
Condor		11 Oct	13 Oct



Belgium - Reduced Rate for Samples without Value - "Éch[antillon] Sans valeur" - Rate 17 00 francs per 25 grams airmail, .70 surface.  
New Cachet "d" for Letter Mail - Double strike of rubber "d" cachet, formerly used for mail posted on board.



	Recife	Las Palmas	Frankfurt
Zeppelin	2 Oct	4 Oct	
DLH		4 Oct	5 Oct



Uruguay - Dropped at Las Palmas - Postage .50 peso airmail, .12 surface

#### ELEVENTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT



Deutsche Lufthansa Flight to Exchange Point at Las Palmas - Berlin code letter "a".  
 Reduced Rate for Printed Matter - Weight 50 grams - Postage RM 3.00 airmail (2 x 1.50 per 25 grams beyond Brazil), .05 per 50 grams surface.

The exchange point at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands was used on only one outbound flight.



	Santiago	Recife	Las Palmas
Condor	14 Oct	16 Oct	
Zeppelin		16 Oct	18 Oct



Sunday,  
11 October

**Peru - By PANAGRA to Santiago, for the Condor Connection to Recife** - Airmail routing from Peru to Europe depended on the day of the week - Sunday dispatches were carried across the South Atlantic by the German airmail service, which during this week was flown by the Graf Zeppelin - Postage 3.15 sol airmail (2 x 1.50 per five grams), .15 surface.

## TWELFTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

	Friedr	Recife	Montevideo
Zeppelin	29 Oct	1 Nov	
Condor		1 Nov	2 Nov



**Belgium - Business Letter to Uruguay.**

Postage 34.00 francs airmail  
(2 x 17.00 per 5 grams beyond  
Brazil), 1.75 surface





**Unsuccessful Transfer Flight** - The flight from Friedrichshafen to Frankfurt am Main turned back because of clouds and fog.

#### TWELFTH 1936 OUTBOUND FLIGHT

Departed Friedrichshafen because transfer flight to Frankfurt failed.

	Berlin	Frankf.	Friedr.	Recife
DLH	28 Oct	28 Oct		
DLH		29 Oct	29 Oct	
Zeppelin			29 Oct	1 Nov



**Cachet "a" for Berlin but no Connecting Flight** - Clouds and fog delayed zeppelin departure by 21 hours, so mail flown from Berlin was loaded onto the airship at Friedrichshafen.



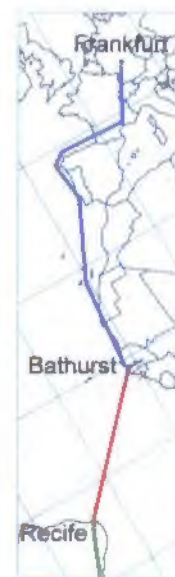
	Friedr.	Recife	B. Aires
Zeppelin	11 Nov	14 Nov	
Condor		14 Nov	15 Nov



**British India to Uruguay** - Flown from Calcutta to Europe by Dutch airline KLM - Reached Europe at a date and time when the Graf Zeppelin provided the next airmail service to South America - Postage 54 annas airmail rate from India beyond Brazil, 3½ annas surface.

Montevideo arrival marking 16 November confirms zeppelin delivery.

	Frankfurt	Bathurst	Recife
DLH	12 Nov	13 Nov	
Zeppelin		13 Nov	14 Nov



—	DLH
—	zeppelin
—	Condor

**Deutsche Lufthansa Flight to New Exchange Point at Bathurst, Gambia** - Posted eleven hours after the zeppelin departure and flown by DLH to meet the zeppelin in West Africa - Postage RM 1.25 airmail, .25 surface.

Bathurst was the outbound exchange point for the rest of the 1936 zeppelin season.



Friedr.	Recife	Rio
11 Nov	14 Nov	
	14 Nov	14 Nov



70 Gram Letter Paying RM 18.20 Postage - Two meter strikes used because the maximum denomination for this machine was 999 - Postage RM 17.50 airmail (14 x 1.25 per 5 grams), .70 quadruple surface.



## 1936 SHUTTLE FLIGHT

A shuttle flight in November 1936 crossed from Recife to Gambia and back, using the same routes and procedures as 1935.

## EASTBOUND SHUTTLE



**To Poland** - Flown by zeppelin to Gambia and by the German Airline from there to Frankfurt  
- Postage 4\$200 airmail.

## WESTBOUND SHUTTLE

Gambia	Recife
Zeppelin	22 Nov 23 Nov



Received  
24 November

**French Mail** - Flown by Air France to Marseilles, by DLH from there to Gambia, by zeppelin shuttle across the South Atlantic, and by Condor to Buenos Aires - Postage 8.50 airmail, 1.50 surface.



Recife	Las Palmas	Frankfurt
27 Nov	29 Nov	
	29 Nov	30 Nov



Sequence number  
5643 on back

**Bolivia - Delivery by Pneumatic Mail within Prague** - Sequence numbers "678" and "5643" show delivery by pneumatic tube within the city - Postage 2.00 boliviano airmail, .25 surface.



**Brazil - Personal letter to Denmark** - Arrived 1 December - Postage 4\$200 airmail.

### LAST GRAF ZEPPELIN FLIGHT TO CARRY LETTER MAIL ACROSS SOUTH ATLANTIC

The Zeppelin Company lost the franchise to carry letter mail to South America at the end of the 1936 season  
- The Graf Zeppelin carried only heavy items and mail posted on board on her flights to Brazil in 1937.